

**Amendments to the Specification**

Please replace the paragraph at page 4, lines 4 through 11 with the following amended paragraph:

The present invention features administering to a patient a composition comprising alpha-ketoalkanoic acid and/or one of its derivatives, which specifically includes a physiologically-acceptable salt of alpha-ketoalkanoic acid, an ester of alpha-ketoalkanoic acid, or an amide of alpha-ketoalkanoic acid for the treatment of a cytokine-mediated inflammatory condition. Suitable alpha-ketoalkanoic acids include C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> straight chained or branched alpha-ketoalkanoic acids, for example, pyruvic acid. Physiologically acceptable salts, of alpha-ketoalkanoic acids include Na<sup>+</sup>, K<sup>+</sup>, Ca<sup>++</sup>, Mg<sup>++</sup>, NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup> and the like.